

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUANCE SYSTEM

Mayor's Order 2008-63
April 10, 2008

SUBJECT: Establishment of a Disaster Relocation and Rental Assistance Program

ORIGINATING AGENCY: Office of the Mayor

By virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the District of Columbia by section 422(6) and (11) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, as amended, 87 Stat. 790, Pub. L. No. 93-198, D.C. Official Code § 1-204.22(6) (2006 Repl.), section 5012 of the Fiscal Year 2008 Budget Support Act of 2007, September 18, 2007 (D.C. Law 17-20; 54 DCR 7052), and section 7 of the Homeless Services Reform Act of 2005, effective October 22, 2005 (D.C. Law 16-35; D.C. Official Code § 4-753.01), it is hereby **ORDERED** that:

I. ESTABLISHMENT

There is established in the government of the District of Columbia, Department of Human Services (DHS), a Disaster Relocation and Rental Assistance Program (Program). DHS shall implement this Program pursuant to the Homeless Services Reform Act of 2005 (HSRA), effective October 22, 2005 (D.C. Law 16-35; D.C. Official Code §§ 4-751.01 *et seq.*), to prevent the onset of massive homelessness due to a disaster.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Program is to provide relocation and rental assistance to persons displaced from their residences in the District of Columbia due to a public emergency. The Mayor may direct that relocation and rental assistance be made available under the Program when circumstances exist that cannot be fully ameliorated by short-term disaster assistance services provided by the current partners under Emergency Support Function (ESF) 6 – “Mass Care” of the District Response Plan (Response Plan).

Low income households displaced by emergencies are disproportionately adversely affected by disasters that have long term consequences. These households have limited income and resources available to relocate and find it difficult to locate affordable residences in the District of Columbia that are equivalent to the homes from which they have been displaced. Victims of fire, in particular, are at risk of homelessness during the long-term renovation or rehabilitation of their residences. Consequently, there is a need to provide additional resources and greater coordination of services between District agencies to support the relocation of displaced families during prolonged community recovery from a disaster affecting the District. The Program will provide additional resources and service coordination.

III. DISASTER RELOCATION AND RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

- A. Pursuant to the Program, DHS shall provide relocation and rental assistance, to displaced low income tenants when the long-term consequences of a disaster make it necessary to assist these tenants in obtaining temporary housing pending the renovation of their residences or acquisition of alternative permanent housing solutions.
- B. The Mayor may invoke the Program when the Mayor has determined that the short term disaster assistance services provided pursuant to ESF 6 of the Response Plan will not effectively ameliorate the risk to the health, safety, or welfare of the displaced residents and eliminate or reduce the risk of significant homelessness due to the disaster. DHS shall implement the Program upon its invocation by the Mayor.
- C. Temporary rental assistance shall be a temporary rental subsidy provided to eligible low income displaced households, subject to subsection G, for a period not to exceed the availability of their leasehold residence at the time the disaster occurred following renovation or two (2) years, whichever is sooner.
- D. Temporary rental assistance payments shall not exceed the difference between the current rent of the leasehold residence and the current Department of Housing and Urban Development Fair Market Rents for the District of Columbia for the same unit size as the current leasehold residence.
- E. The Mayor may, at his discretion, establish a rent stabilization period where all residents, regardless of income, may receive rental assistance for a period not to exceed six (6) months where the rental payment shall not exceed the amount of rent paid under the lease agreement for the previously occupied unit where the disaster occurred. At the conclusion of the rent stabilization period, beginning the seventh (7th) month, the tenant shall be required to pay the amount of the rent of the leasehold of the previously occupied unit or thirty percent (30%) of the gross household income as set forth in regulations, whichever is greater.
- F. Temporary rental assistance under the Program shall be subject to the availability of funds.
- G. The Department may prioritize temporary rental assistance according to factors such as:
 - 1. Household composition, including whether a household contains a family with children, or elderly or disabled members;
 - 2. Unit size and availability; and

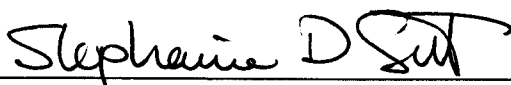
3. Special needs or resources of the eligible household.
- H. DHS shall not be required to provide temporary rental assistance if a less costly alternative to permanent housing is made available to the tenant, or funds are insufficient to provide temporary rental assistance for the tenant.
- I. Relocation Assistance shall include assistance with location and referral to a comparable apartment in size to the previously occupied leasehold property, and case management, including an assessment and referral for other public benefit services for which the household may be eligible. DHS may adjust unit size based upon the availability of units, or the special needs or resources of the household.
- J. The Program is not an entitlement and shall be invoked at the discretion of the Mayor.

IV. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DHS

- A. DHS shall implement Program upon its invocation by the Mayor in an Executive Order. Upon its invocation, DHS shall, subject to the availability of funds, provide relocation assistance and temporary rental assistance to tenants displaced due to a disaster.
- B. The Director of DHS is delegated authority to and shall promulgate rules necessary to implement the Program, including eligibility criteria for the receipt of relocation assistance and temporary rental assistance.
- C. DHS shall coordinate with the Emergency Management Agency, American Red Cross, D.C. Housing Authority, Department of Housing and Development, other District agencies and community based organizations, and private land owners to develop an inventory of apartments available to assist eligible households with temporary relocation.

- V. EFFECTIVE DATE:** This Order shall become effective immediately.


ADRIAN M. FENTY
MAYOR

ATTEST: 
STEPHANIE D. SCOTT
SECRETARY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA